(c) A total number of thirty Jaguar aircraft have been lost in aircrashes since induction till 20th November, 2001.

Present Stage of ALH Project

1686. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the present stage of progress of the Advanced Light Helicopter project and by when it is likely to reach the manufacturing stage;

(b) the major steps taken thereon, so far; and

(c) the major steps taken the son, so far;

(d) the expenditure so far incurred as against the original estimated cost?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Four prototypes of Advanced Light Helicopter have been manufactured and have completed 1361 flight tests amounting to more than 1320 flying hours towards evaluation and certification. The Design certification of skid variant Advanced Light Helicopter has already been achieved in March, 2001. Further flight evaluation is required for certification of wheeled version and is planned for completion by end February 2002.

Limited Series Production of ten helicopters has been launched and two of them are ready for delivery to Army. Delivery to other customers *viz.*, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard is also planned to commence during the current production year.

(c) An expenditure of Rs. 534.26 crores has already been incurred against the sanction of Rs. 536.05 crores accorded in November, 1998.

Book on wars and conflicts since independence

1687. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring out an official version of the various wars and conflicts which the country has fought since independence;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any team of historians/scholars have been identified for the purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof togetherwith their qualifications, experience and expertise in the field; and

(e) by when the panel is likely to be appointed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) Official versions of most of the Wars and Conflicts fought since Independence are available. A Committee has been recently constituted under the Chairmanship of former Defence Secretary Shri N.N. Vohra comprising Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar and Dr. S.N. Prasad, to review the issue of the publication of four of these Histories.

Supply of defective sleeping bags for troops in Siachen Glacier

1688. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Quality Assurance Officer of the concerned procurement wing cleared consignment of defective sleeping bags for our troops in Siachen Glacier post during 1998-99;

(b) whether three consignments of defective bags were cleared without testing the sample bag and the fourth consignment of defective bags was cleared after the inspection of the sample bags; and

(c) whether these sleeping bags were purchased at a cost of Rs. 7.50 crores and were ment to be used at lower altitudes?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) During 1992-93, the first three lots of sleeping bags received from M / s Moncler, France were cleared by the Quality Assurance Officers based on the visual parameters only without comparing them with the sample bag which was not made available nor asked for. For the 4th lot, the inspection team did not make any specific endorsement clearing the stock for issue to the user units as the sample available did not bear the signature of the approving / competent authority. The value of the supply order for 8588 sleeping bag was Rs. 7.65 crores approximately and they were purchased for use at high altitudes and extreme cold climates.

Declaring Bhuj as a field station for Army

1689. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that senior officials of the Army have been repeatedly pressing for declaring quake-ravaged district of Bhuj as a field station;